



Sunset Sounds
The Giannini Brass Band takes the stage today at 7 p.m. at the bandstand.

THOMASVILLE TIMES

Thursday, July 22, 2010

Taylor Made
Business trainer Marilyn Taylor wraps up her series on Crucial Conversations. See BUSINESS, Page 4



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TIMES PHOTO/ERIN WILTGEN

Local children make their way through the lunch line at Thomasville Primary School Wednesday to receive a free hot meal. The meals are offered weekdays to children up to age 18.

Leandro funds save schools

BY ELIOT DUKE
Staff Writer

Faced with an already difficult budget for the upcoming year, Thomasville City Schools couldn't afford to lose any more money from the state. Dealing with discretionary cuts was one thing, but losing more than half a million dollars on top of that would have put TCS behind the proverbial 8-ball.



Thanks to a joint effort from state representatives and Davidson County Schools, TCS will receive its full allotment from the Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Fund (DSSF). Name here a program that gives money to improve the education of at-risk students. DSSF was created six years ago following the Leandro court case that determined all children in North Carolina have a basic right to a sound education, and TCS was one of the initial 16 school systems to receive funding from the program. TCS is expected to get \$650,000 this year from DSSF.

"The big hit was the work [House Majority leader] Hugh Holliman and others did with saving the Leandro money," TCS Superintendent Keith Tobin said. "We knew there was a possibility of losing around \$1.4 million in this county alone if this DSSF was taken away. [Holliman] fought hard, along with some other folks to save that



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Summertime Service

Program keeps children fed while out of school

BY ERIN WILTGEN
Staff Writer

Thomasville City Schools will continue its Federal Funded Summer Food Service Program for another month-and-a-half, providing Chair City children with a hot meal free of charge. The program, which began on

June 14, runs until Aug. 13 and serves a free lunch to all children 18 years of age or less.

"The goal is to feed the children that may not be able to eat a nutritious meal during the day while their parents are at work," said Brenda Watford, TCS child nutrition director. "We're so glad that we can do this."

Summer lunch serves hot lunches similar to those children would receive in school. Though Watford doesn't know exactly when Thomasville began the program, she says it has been around her entire 16 years with the school system.

And the program hasn't gone unused.

"We're feeding about 900 to 1,000 children a day," Watford said. "It's awesome."

Last year, TCS expanded the program's reach, serving lunches through a van delivery system at major school bus stops.

"With the way the economy is, some of the parents couldn't get their children here and some couldn't ride their bikes to come and eat," Watford said. "We just wanted anyone who wanted to

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Benefits may be extended to jobless

BY ELIOT DUKE
Staff Writer

Unemployed workers who saw their checks stop on June 2 may be getting a reprieve following a Senate vote to extend unemployment benefits.

On Tuesday, the Senate voted 60-40 to move ahead on a unemployment benefits extension bill that could allow thousands of North Carolinians whose benefits expired last month to continue drawing a check from the government. Should the bill get signed into law by President Barack Obama, it would mark the eighth time unemployment benefits have been extended in the past two years. The Senate will take a final vote before passing the bill to the House of Representatives for final approval.

"If you assume, and I'm not, that the House passes it and the president signs it, then yes there will be some benefits to those people who are unemployed here in North Carolina," Andy James,

spokesman for the Employment Commission of North Carolina, said. "I'm sure it will benefit somebody and in terms of thousands, probably, but we'll just have to see what the law says. It would be like asking about the weather tomorrow."

James says that since July 2, 146,000 people have seen their benefits expire, and there are still close to 500,000 unemployed workers across North Carolina. An estimated 230,000 people in the state are currently receiving a unemployment check, and are eligible to do so for up to 99 weeks.

"The maximum amount of weeks to receive benefits is 99," said James. "If you've already received benefits for 99 weeks than this legislature is not going to help you."

In Davidson County, where the unemployment rate registered 11.9 percent in May, the ESC has paid out \$118,227,504

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'If you've already received benefits for 99 weeks than this legislature is not going to help you.'

— Andy James
ESC Spokesman

Thomasville Police award named in volunteer's memory

BY ERIN WILTGEN
Staff Writer

Her time may have been brief, but the impact Meghann Murphy had on the Thomasville Police Department outlasted her two days of volunteer work and will continue far into the future.

Thomasville City Council and TPD presented Melanie and Sherril Bumgardner, Murphy's mother and step-father, with a proclamation at the council meeting Monday night, honoring their daughter, who died on May 15, 2010, after years of respiratory illness.

TPD also presented the Bumgardners with a plaque for the new Meghann Murphy Volunteer Service Award, which will hang in the department lobby.

"She had an affection for law enforcement," said Thomasville Police Chief Jeff Insley. "It was something that she wanted to do. But unfortunately, Meghann succumbed to a medical issue, and she went home to be with

the Lord. We do sorely, sorely miss her."

Murphy developed a bad case of the flu at age 12, which progressed into pneumonia and a staph infection.

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TIMES PHOTO/ERIN WILTGEN

Mayor Joe Bennett presents Melanie and Sherril Bumgardner a proclamation in the their daughter's honor.

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